

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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/103 W

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R 241943Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 532
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 13481

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, VN, GW

SUBJECT: NGUYEN CO THACH VISIT TO BONN - INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

REFS: A) BONN 13397 (NOTAL; B) STATE 179590 (NOTAL)

1. SRV DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER THACH MADE THE FOLLOWING
COMMENTS TO GERMAN OFFICIALS ON THE ASIAN SITUATION
DURING HIS VISIT HERE LAST WEEK.

2. CAMBODIA. THACH SAID THE COMMUNIST PARTY (CP) WAS
EXCEEDINGLY WEAK AND ITS DOMESTIC PLICIES SHOULD BE
SEEN IN THIS LIGHT. THE EVACUATION OF PHNOM PENH,
FOR EXAMPLE, WAS DICTATED BY CP CONCERN THAT THE CITY
WOULD REMAIN A STRONGHOLD OF LON NOL. DRACONIAN
MEASURES SUCH AS DIVIDING FAMILIES BY SENDING THEM TO
DIFFERENT VILLAGES AND CHANGING THE SURNAMES OF CHILDREN
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WERE THE PRODUCT OF FEAR. THESE POLICIES HAD NOT GONE
UNCHALLENGED WITHIN THE CP AND THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDER-
ABLE INTERNAL STRIFE WHICH RESULTED IN MINOR COUP
ATTEMPTS (BY DISSIDENT CP ELEMENTS) AT THE END OF 1976
AND EARLY IN 1977.

3. THACH CLAIMED THAT HANOI WANTED A PEACEFUL SOLUTION

TO ITS CONFLICT WITH CAMBODIA, WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO PHNOM PENH'S DESIRE TO BUILD A "BORDER OF HATE" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE SRV HAD NO FEAR OF CHINA AND COULD EASILY WIN A MILITARY VICTORY OVER CAMBODIA. THE CONFLICT HAD BEEN A DRAIN ON THE VIETNAMESE ECONOMY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT "NEW ECONOMIC ZONES" HAD HAD TO BE MOVED AWAY FROM THE BORDER AREA.

4. CHINA. THACH REPEATED FAMILIAR THEMES, CLAIMING THAT PEKING HAD CREATED TENSIONS (HE SPOKE CONSTANTLY OF THE DANGER OF WAR WITH CHINA) BY TRYING TO REDUCE THE SRV'S INDEPENDENCE AND CUTTING OFF AID WHEN HANOI REFUSED TO YIELD. THACH SAID HANOI HAD JOINED CEMA AS A CONSEQUENCE OF CHINESE PRESSURES. THE GERMANS TAKE THIS WITH A GRAIN OF SALT, BEING MORE INCLINED TO ATTRIBUTE THE MOVE TO MOSCOW'S DESIRE TO ENLIST EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN AID EFFORTS TO THE SRV.

5. THACH NOTED THAT SRV DIFFICULTIES WITH CHINA HAD THEIR POSITIVE SIDE: FOLLOWING THE RIGORS OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT, THE VIETNAMESE HAD SHOWN A MARKED DESIRE TO BECOME TOO RELAXED. THE NEW THREAT FROM CHINA HAD REKINDLED WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARDER.

6. JAPAN. THACH SAID THE SRV WOULD PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY ON ITS TIES WITH JAPAN.
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